

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 543
By Lynn

A RESOLUTION to honor President George W. Bush and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces who served during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

WHEREAS, the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United States and Commander-in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, forged the national will and joined by a "coalition of the willing" successfully conducted Operation Iraqi Freedom to assure the safety of free nations by eliminating weapons of mass destruction with their delivery means and to liberate the oppressed Iraqi people; and

WHEREAS, the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein, following its unprovoked attack on the neighboring country of Kuwait, persisted for ten years in ignoring United Nations' sanctions, continued to host known terrorist operatives, thwarted the efforts of United Nations inspection teams to verify the destruction of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons of mass destruction, and demonstrated a well-documented history of human rights atrocities, requiring that free nations act; and

WHEREAS, after exhaustive efforts to diplomatically attain Iraqi government compliance with unanimously passed United Nations resolutions directing Iraq to disarm and destroy weapons of "mass destruction" and the Iraqi regime's determination to thwart United Nations weapons inspection teams, the United States, joined by the United Kingdom, Australia, Poland, and others, committed military forces to effect a regime change, eliminate weapons of mass destruction, and return the government of Iraq to the Iraqi people; and

WHEREAS, Operation Iraqi Freedom was prosecuted with unprecedented speed and boldness accomplishing one of the swiftest military advances by heavy arms in history, while applying overwhelming combat power judiciously and with precision to attack the heart of the Iraqi regime without directing violence against civilian targets and resulting in fewer military and civilian casualties; and

WHEREAS, the courageous men and women of the United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps, United States Coast Guard, and the Mariners of the Military Sealift Command joined by 3,400 members of the Tennessee Army and Air Force National Guard and Reserves and supported by their families, representing the very best of our nation, conducted themselves professionally and with courage while demonstrating compassion for the people of Iraq and the defeated soldiers of the Iraqi regime; and

WHEREAS, the ultimate sacrifice for liberation was given by some two hundred coalition soldiers, which included two courageous Tennessee patriots in the service of their country, Lance Corporal Patrick R. Nixon, United States Marine Corps and Specialist Thomas A. Foley, III, United States Army, earning them a place in history among the most courageous of our nation who answered the "call to arms" to defend our country and to protect the innocent; and

WHEREAS, the unflinching determination of President George W. Bush to remove the tyrannical regime of Saddam Hussein by building a "coalition of the willing," providing political leadership in the face of formidable international opposition, serving as Commander-in-Chief in

both name and action, and placing trust in our country's military uniformed leadership to execute military operations, achieved unequalled success; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that on behalf of the citizens of Tennessee, this General Assembly expresses its profound gratitude to the men and women of the United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps, United States Coast Guard, Military Sealift Command, Army and Air Force National Guard and Reserves, and their supporting families who served during Operation Iraqi Freedom, thanking them for their great courage, high degree of professionalism, and unselfish sacrifice in advancing the cause of freedom.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our deep sorrow to the families of servicemen and servicewomen who lost their lives or suffered grievous injury while serving their country during Operation Iraqi Freedom and express our gratitude for their sacrifice for our liberty.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we honor President George W. Bush for his courageous political leadership and serving as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States of America and thank him for his determination in seeing this dangerous but necessary military operation through to its conclusion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United States, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Meyers, and General Tommy Franks, Commander-in-Chief, United States Central Command, with this final clause omitted from such copies.